Slaughter: Stem Cell Debate should be about Science, Progress and Saving Lives... not Extremist Ideology

Slaughter Supports Legislation, Urges Bush to Reconsider Veto

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Ranking Member of the House Committee on Rules, today voted in support of **H.R. 2520,** the *Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 200*
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H.R. 810
, the
Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005
Rep. Slaughter strongly urges the President not to veto these vital pieces of legislation
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H.R. 2520 will reauthorize the National Marrow Donor Program, create a new cord blood program, and provide an overall structure for uniform Federal standards for cord blood collection and storage. Rep. Slaughter is an original cosponsor of H.R. 810, which expands the number of stem cell lines that are eligible for federally funded research and institutes ethical requirements on stem cell lines eligible for federally funded research.

The National Institute of Health has emphasized the potential of stem cells to make innovative progress in the treatment of Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's Disease, diabetes, heart disease, and spinal cord injury. In August of 2001, however, President Bush prohibited the use of federal funds for research on new stem cell lines, succumbing to ideological disapproval from the far right.

"It is a shame that we are micro-managing science," Rep. Slaughter said.

She continued, " **This is the same debate that America had about transplants and blood transfusions. When doctors were considering blood transfusions, Americans were asking, should we be doing it? Of course we should!"**

"I watch South Korea and other countries making strides, as my own country becomes a scientific backwater," Rep. Slaughter added. **"People deserve better than 19th century thinking."**

Despite claims by the Bush Administration that the decision to ban research on new stem cells would not adversely affect patients, the lack of federal funding has prohibited stem cell research from reaching its full potential. Currently, only a small percentage of eligible embryos are approved for use in stem cell research. As a result, many opportunities are being missed.